

# 2001 Small Urban & Rural Progress Report

**Darrel Feasel, Section Leader**

**Mark Rickards, Small Urban Program**

**Neil Sherman, Specialized Programs**

**Elroy Bentick, Compliance Unit**

2001 was a good year for the Small Urban and Rural Section. Led by 14-year DRPT veteran Darrel Feasel, the Section was involved in a multitude of projects from the CTAV rodeo in Big Stone Gap to the continued development of STAR Transit on the Eastern Shore. Literally hundreds of contracts were executed involving millions of dollars for public transportation. As usual, Neil Sherman, a 23-year veteran of DRPT and state government spearheaded the 5310 element, that program which brings the human services transportation to the section. His experience with vehicle specifications and inspections are noted as tops in both the private and public sectors. Elroy Bentick, the section's compliance officer was instrumental in providing assistance to drug & alcohol programs across the Commonwealth. Mark Rickards, the newest addition to the section, brought with him from the Urban Section in January two projects of high priority to the department. These are the Jamestown 2007 commemoration and the 2003 Aviation World's Fair. Mark, who now has been with DRPT eight years, runs the 5307 program with experience as a transit manager and planner before joining the DRPT. Following is a project-by-project listing of what took place in our section in 2001.



# **High Priority Projects**

## **FTA 5307**

### ***Charlottesville***

CTS completed a TDP in 2001 that calls for a complete expansion of the service area, a new transfer facility at the end of the downtown mall, and a new operations/maintenance facility on Avon Street extended. Capital funds (STP & 5307 are programmed for these projects.



### ***JAUNT, Inc.,***

JAUNT celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2001 and provided over 280,000 passenger trips, which is the highest ridership in JAUNT's history. JAUNT made progress on its DRPT funded ITS project and began a second year of the FTA Job Access project. In 2002 JAUNT will continue to work on the ITS project, Job Access and begin planning for a construction project which will expand JAUNT's current office space.

### ***Lynchburg***

GLTC in 2001 implemented a comprehensive service plan that changed the dynamics of the route structure enabling GLTC to better such attractions as River Ridge Mall, the airport, and the US 501 by-pass. GLTC continued to serve as the Greyhound agent and 2001 saw completion of the Kemper Street Station renovations as a multi-modal project.

### ***Roanoke***

A demonstration grant setting a fare-free shuttle for downtown workers was implemented between the Civic Center parking area and downtown destinations. Funds were acquired for a second year operation for FY 02.

### ***Danville***

A demand response route proved very positive for the Danville Transit Service. Named "Reserve-a-Ride" the service allows for specialized service at a cost of \$2. The transit manager, Marc Adelman also continues to be instrumental in the development of the Danville airport to regional status.

### ***Fredericksburg***

FRED completed another successful year by expanding service into Stafford County. This expansion was funded by DRPT in an FY2001 Demo grant project. The second phase of this Demo will expand service into Carolina County in 2002. Glenn Jenkins, FRED's Driver Trainer won the 2001 CTAA National Rodeo Award finishing as the top driver at the CTAA EXPO in Salt Lake City, Utah. FRED also completed negotiations with Greyhound Lines to purchase their current facility. FTA approved the purchase and money should change hands by the end of the year. FRED staff has already begun the planning effort needed to replace the current facility with a new Multi-modal facility serving the administrative, transfer and intercity bus needs of FRED. On a sad note Ms. Rebecca Martin, FRED Transit Manager left and became the new transit manager at Blacksburg Transit in Blacksburg, Virginia.

### ***Bristol***

Bristol Transit saw the delivery of two body-on chassis vehicles. Danny Hunt was made full-time transit manager after the passing of long-time manager Bill Campbell last year.

## **FTA 5309 Capital Earmark Grant Projects**

### ***Loudoun County Transportation Association Facility Construction***

Loudoun Transit broke ground on their new Multi-Model Transit facility in May 2001. The construction is moving on satisfactorily. Loudoun Transit's construction manager has done a yeoman's job in ensuring that the construction work is in compliance with the specifications and meets all FTA and state requirements. Loudoun Transit also started new transit services in Leesburg, Culpeper and Staunton, Virginia.

### ***Farmville Area Bus Equipment Purchase***

The Farmville Area Bus completed their new Transit facility in June 2001. The new building is fantastic and will meet Farmville's needs for many years to come. The FAB staff is in the process of procuring office furniture and equipment and misc. shop and garage equipment with an FTA Section 5309 Earmark pass through grant managed by DRPT staff.

### ***RADAR Facility development and construction***

RADAR continues in the planning phase for their new transit facility. In December, RADAR received a Congressional FTA Section 5309 Earmark of \$1M. This earmark along with STP Transfer funds approved in DRPT's FY2002 program of projects will allow RADAR to build a great facility. DRPT staff will be developing an FTA Section 5309 Earmark grant project through FTA TEAM system in 2002.

### ***MEOC and JAUNT, Inc. facility construction and planning projects***

MEOC and JAUNT were funded in DRPT's FY2002 program of projects with the state share for their construction projects. With the Congressional FTA Section 5309 Earmarks approved in December both MEOC and JAUNT will receive the Federal STP Transfer funding needed to build these facilities. Both MEOC and JAUNT have begun preliminary planning efforts on these projects. DRPT staff will be developing FTA Section 5311 contract amendments through the FTA TEAM system in 2002.

### ***BAY Transit facility planning project***

BAY Transit received a Facility Feasibility Study grant in FY2001 to begin planning for two intermodal facilities to serve the ten county region that BAY Transit provides rural public transportation services. BAY Transit staff has hired an architect to begin preliminary design of the facilities. Staff has also hosted a number of peer-to-peer meetings with other transit systems to ensure that every aspect of the project makes sense. DRPT staff has participated in the A/E process and the peer-to-peer meeting process providing technical assistance. It is anticipated that BAY Transit will apply for capital funding in FY2003 program year.

### ***FRED multi-modal facility planning project***

FRED staff is just beginning to begin the planning phase for their multi-modal facility. During 2001 FRED's staff spent most of their energy on applying for Federal funds through the TEAM system and providing all the Federal requirements to allow the city to purchase the current property. DRPT staff has provided technical assistance throughout this phase of the project. It is anticipated that FRED will hire an architect in 2002 to begin the actual design of the building.

(The above individual projects are rated medium priority as we assist rather than lead local efforts. The high priority is administration and procurement of the FTA funds through the TEAM process)

## **FTA Section 5310**

The FY2003 application has been distributed to applicants. For the FY2002 program purchase orders have been completed for the twenty-eight recipients.

## **FTA Section 5311**

The FTA Section 5311 program provides operating, capital and RTAP funds for eighteen (18) rural transit systems in Virginia. The FY1999 program will be completed when six (6) buses are delivered to Blacksburg Transit in the early Spring 2002. The FY2001 program is progressing satisfactorily with all operating and RTAP projects complete. The FY2001 capital program should be completed upon Blacksburg receiving seven (7) buses and Paratransit vans. The FY2002 program is progressing satisfactorily.

## **Jobs Access and Commute Program**

DRPT is the process in completing FY2001 JARC grant with FTA. DRPT received an earmark for 3.5 million. 1.5 will be used in FY2001. Department of Social Services is matching the program. DRPT will be doing official site reviews in 2002 of all sub-recipients

## **RTAP Program**

A myriad of technical assistance, peer to peer and scholarships were completed with RTAP funds during 2001. RTAP funds were used to support a very successful CTAV EXPO 2002 Training Conference in Salem, Virginia as well as to support the Mid-Atlantic RTAP program with MAPS training and the first ever Software EXPO in Harrisburg, Virginia. Transit professionals and vendors attended the CTAV EXPO from 18 different states including Hawaii. It should be noted that DRPT and CTAV were poised to host the Software EXPO when the Mid-Atlantic RTAP group requested that it become a Mid-Atlantic Region effort. The Software EXPO was very successful and will be repeated again in March 2002.

## **Statewide Capital Assistance Program for Paratransit Services**

The Statewide Capital Assistance Program for Paratransit Services is progressing satisfactorily with the FY2001 program almost complete and FY2002 program partially completed.

## **Drug and Alcohol Compliance Program**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has revised its drug and alcohol testing regulation. The new DOT 49 CFR Part 40 has impacted all drug and alcohol service providers. Most provisions of the new rule went into effect on August 1, 2001. Among the changes are new Custody and Control Forms for collection sites, new and on-going training and certification for service technicians, certification for MRO's and Substance Abuse Professionals. In addition the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has revised its drug and alcohol policy to incorporate the new DOT regulation. The new FTA rule 49,CFR Part 655 went into effect on August 1, 2001. All public transit agencies that receive FTA funds are required to implement the new rules into their substance abuse policies. DRPT will continue to provide guidance, oversight and technical assistance as needed to insure that all Section 5311 transit service providers comply with the new rules.

**Title VI Civil Rights** The current federal Title VI Program expires on July 27, 2002. A new program is being developed that will be submitted to FTA for approval on or before July 27, 2002

## **2003 Aviation World's Fair**

This project in 2001 saw DRPT participate on three of the committees in planning for the mega-event that will occur in April 2003 at the Newport News-Williamsburg Airport. DRPT participates on the Steering Committee, the Ground Transportation Subcommittee, and the Aviation subcommittee.

## **Jamestown 2007**

The 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first permanent settlement in what would become the United States of America took place here in Jamestown in 1607. Our department has been selected with the cooperation of the Secretary of Transportation to administer the transportation element of the commemoration. To date, DRPT and their consultants Cambridge Systematics, Inc. have completed Phase I. A final report can be read on our web page. Phase II that takes the plan elicited in Phase I a step further began in September and will run through June 2002. CSI is again the consultant. .

## **5310 On-site Compliance Reviews**

DRPT is required to do a site visit of all FTA 5310 applicants every three years. Elroy Bentick and NIS completed almost 20-site review in the last year. DRPT has almost 45 recipients with FTA vehicles

## **5311 On-site Compliance Reviews**

It is anticipated that FTA Section 5311 On-site compliance reviews will be done in early 2002 and completed by April 2002.

## **Drug and Alcohol On-site Reviews**

It is anticipated that FTA Section 5311 Drug and Alcohol Testing On-site reviews of all FTA Section 5311 systems and their contractors will be completed by April 2002.

## **Vehicle Specification Development**

DRPT has begun to order vehicles for the first time through Department of General Service (DGA) electronic purchasing system (EVA). DRPT renewed all eight-vehicle contracts from 2001. DRPT will decide in spring of 2002 whether to renew contract or begin the procurement process in the summer of 2003. All vehicle procurement will be done through DGA electronic procurement process

## **Statewide Vehicle Specifications and Purchase**

DRPT will purchase vehicles for FTA Section 5310 recipients. DRPT will also make an official request if other public transit provider would like to be included in state procurement purchase

## **Annual Grant Application Development**

FTA Grant applications were submitted to FTA Region III for the Section 5310, 5311, Job Access and Reverse Commute Program and Section 5309 Earmark grant for the Town of Farmville. All grant applications were submitted on TEAM and approved by FTA Region III.

## **Annual Grant Contract Development**

All FTA Section 5309, 5310, 5311 and JARC Project Agreements were completed and executed on time. All State Aid for Transportation Project Agreements were completed and executed on time.

## **Medium Priority Projects**

### **Small Urban Training Program**

In FY-2001 several scholarships were issued to transit managers and their staff to attend various transit related training. The 2002 program is currently underway and several requests have been approved. DRPT hosted a two-day workshop that provided hands on training on the development of a transit model safety program. Fourteen participants from eight transit Systems took part in the training. The training was conducted by The Risk Management Center, Inc.



### **MPO Planning and Technical Committees**

DRPT is a non-voting member on the Charlottesville MPO (TJPDC), the Roanoke MPO, and the Central Virginia MPO (Lynchburg). DRPT maintains a voting presence on the technical committees in each of these MPOS, plus a voting membership on the CMC (Community Mobility Committee) in Charlottesville. DRPT maintains an active role in developing the TIP and LRP in each of these MPOS as well as Danville and Bristol as the need arises. Only one meeting was attended in Danville in 2001 and none in Bristol. DRPT is well thought of in each of these organizations and has established relationships with the other jurisdictions, as we have become the standard bearer for public transportation and rail in the Commonwealth.

### **Specialized Transportation Council Liaison**

The Specialized Transportation Council met twice in 2002 with Lt. Governor Hager as chairman. The next meeting will be after the General Assembly finishes.

### **FTA Bus Safety and Security**

DRPT maintains a seat on the development committee with FTA and AASHTO on the recent concerns involving safety and security. At present, it appears FTA is going to require a new training program that will establish an official safety and security program for each property. DRPT is monitoring this process.



## **Driver Training Program**

DRPT continues to use the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Program. Darrel is a certified DD8 training instructor and taught a number of training classes during CY2001.

## **CTAV EXPO and Training**

The CTAV EXPO and Training conference held in Salem, Virginia in August 2001 was a tremendous success. Eighteen states including Hawaii was represented. Mike Noel and Real Lazaro again provided management training and the DRPT EXPO has the most vendors in the eleven history of the EXPO. Attendance at the EXPO approached 200 participants, which is a record. Plans are underway to host the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual EXPO in Salem, Virginia in August 2002. DRPT supports this event with funding and technical assistance. The vendors attending this EXPO told DRPT staff and CTAV representatives that this EXPO is the best one that they attend of any state.

## **CTAV Statewide Rodeo**

MEOC hosted the CTAV Statewide Rodeo in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. This was the first rodeo held in Southwest Virginia and MEOC staff did a tremendous job in hosting the event. DRPT supports this event with state funds and it continues to be a very worthwhile training opportunity and every year shows the professionalism of Virginia's rural transit drivers. In fact Glenn Jenkins from FRED won CTAA EXPO 2001 National Rodeo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

## **Virginia Transit Liability Pool**

DRPT is a voting member of the Board. DRPT is also currently the secretary/treasurer as well as a member of the executive committee and investment committee. The pool is financially stable and an asset to public transportation entities in the Commonwealth.

## **ITS Projects**

DRPT issued grants in FY-2001 to Blacksburg transit and JAUNT, INC. The JAUNT project is to implement new scheduling software coupled with a mobile data system and a voice response system. JAUNT has since hired a consultant who will handle the development and implementation of the project. The Blacksburg project is for the implementation of an AVL system that will provide real time information to passengers; work on this project is in the development stage.

## **ITS in the Shenandoah Valley**

This is a project that seems to have a life of its own, Mike Hite continues to progress and convinced FTA to award an additional \$125,000 to support continuing the project.

DRPT staff will spend additional time on this project in 2002.

## **VTA Liaison**

The Virginia Transit Association meets annually and serves DRPT in the capacity as legislative liaison. The current VTA meeting will be held at DRPT on November 30.

## **CTAV Board Liaison**

Darrel completed his term as Secretary of CTAV in 2001. Darrel has served the Board of Directors for the last six years as Secretary or as a Board Director. CTAV continues to be a great organization that is focused on providing a myriad of training opportunities for all of Virginia's community transportation systems and continues to educate the General Assembly on community transportation needs. CTAV has strongly supported DRPT in the past and I assume will continue to in the future.

## **DRPT Safety and Security Plan Development**

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, DRPT has formed a committee in house to look at this issue. The committee has met on three occasions and will continue to meet in 2002 to augment DRPT's current Safety and Security plans and will try to define what DRPT's leadership role should be in the future. DRPT hosted a two-day training course entitled "Training and Development of Vehicle Safety Programs for Rural and Coordinated Transportation Systems in Virginia". This workshop was taught by Rich O'Hare and was developed based on a model for the Ohio DOT. Elroy spend numerous hours putting the workshop together and it was well attended by Virginia's transit systems.

## **Transit Start-Ups**

New service started in Culpepper in November 2001. This service was supported by a DRPT Demo project to Loudoun Transit. In the first weeks of the service ridership was been higher than expected. Loudoun Transit also became the management company for the new Trolley service in the City of Staunton. This again was a DRPT funded Demo project with the City of Staunton. Staff spent a considerable amount of time assisting the City of Staunton in developing vehicle specifications and assisting in find a management team to manage the day to day operation of the trolley system.

## **Technical Assistance on Demonstration Projects**

### ***STAR Transit to Maryland***

STAR is expected to roll out a new route that connects to transit services at the Maryland line by Spring 2002. A Demonstration Grant funds this.

### ***LT Driver Training and Safety***

Loudoun Transit hired an intern to manage their new Driver Training and Safety Program. The intern has done a great job in setting up the program and creating the paperwork and policies and procedures necessary to bring program into being.

## **CATS: A Case Study**

CATS continue to be a system that DRPT staff has great concerns with. DRPT staff will perform an on-site FTA Section 5311 audit in early 2002 to determine if CATS is meeting the basic requirements of the FTA Section 5311 program. During 2001 DRPT staff spent a considerable amount of time providing technical assistance, until mid-year when the City of Staunton became concerned about the financial and managerial capabilities of the management staff and Board of Directors. Since that time DRPT has taken a hands off position until CATS and the City of Staunton work out their disagreements.

## **James City County Transit Long Range Plan Implementation**

DRPT is currently assisting James City County in the development of a new system that will consist of the current James City County services, William & Mary, Colonial Williamsburg, and the Ride and Relax Shuttle. The system will have a new name, logo, and color scheme. New vehicles are on order and will be in service for May 2002. The City of Williamsburg and York County are also stakeholders in this wonderful opportunity for transit development.

## **Low Priorities**

### **Rural Intercity Bus**

DRPT staff has been working the Greyhound Lines and BAY Transit officials to assist them in developing a possible Demo grant project in FY2003 to provide intercity bus service with the BAY Transit service area (Route 17 corridor from Gloucester to Fredericksburg). We have met on a number of occasions with all participants to see if this project makes sense. It is anticipated that BAY Transit will submit an application for a Demonstration grant in March 2002. DRPT staff has also been working with Loudoun Transit, CATS and FRED in assisting them in their dealings with Greyhound Lines. All three are Greyhound agents.



### **Development of legislative initiatives**

DRPT staff has begun investigating the possibility of legislation that would set up an emergency fund to financially support public transit systems in emergency situations. With the current state budget short fall this idea may not get far, so staff will continue to develop the idea.

### **Federal regulations review**

Darrel had the opportunity to testify before the U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee subcommittee on Highways and Transit to speak about the myriad of Federal regulations that affect community transportation systems. Darrel was well received by the subcommittee and spoke along side Jenna Dorn, FTA Administrator, Bill Mallar, APTA and Dale Marsico, CTAA. The subcommittee is now working on a bill that would reduce the amount of Federal regulations placed on community transportation providers.

During 2001, the FTA made considerable changes to the FTA Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulations; staff has been providing technical assistance to Virginia's FTA Section 5311 systems to meet the changes. DRPT staff will be completing on-site Drug and Alcohol audits for all FTA Section 5311 systems by April 2002.

### **Rt. 13 Study- Eastern Shore**

DRPT serves on the management team for this VDOT study of the US 13 corridor, which includes STAR Transit and the Eastern Shore Railroad.